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Labour Market News

CENTRAL ALBERTA Government of Alberta

JOB SEEKERS

Cyclical jobs

How to cope during a downturn

What do the construction, manufacturing and oil and gas industries all have in common? They're all industries that are cyclical in nature: they boom, and they bust.

The demand for workers in these industries goes up and down based on a variety of factors, from the weather to commodity prices to the strength of the overall economy. In Alberta, some of our major industries are cyclical.

Right now, workers in these industries are facing a variety of challenges. The slowing economy means the need for workers has also slowed. Some employers are downsizing their workforce as their revenues drop.

If you work in a cyclical industry, the downturn may have already had an affect on your workplace. Perhaps there is less overtime available, or maybe there is no work at all.

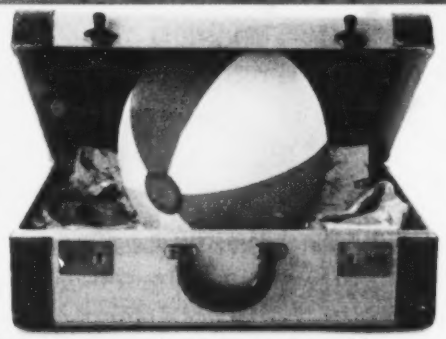
Handling seasonal and economic cycles can be difficult, but don't get discouraged. Whether you're employed or looking for work, now is a good time to look at your options. You may be surprised by the opportunities available to you.

Looking for work: You have options

If there is no work in your field, try looking for other related jobs within the same industry. Just because one aspect of an industry has slowed, doesn't mean all work has stopped.

For example, if you worked as a rig technician on a drilling rig, the skills you gained could be transferred into a service rig position. An oilfield truck driver could move into transportation logistics, while a carpenter who helped build new homes could switch to home renovations or commercial projects.

Continued on page 2



Scheduling staff vacations doesn't have to be stressful.

EMPLOYERS

Take the stress out of staff vacation planning

With summer just around the corner, many employees are looking forward to taking a break from work and going on vacation.

For employers, vacation scheduling can be a challenge. They want to keep their employees happy, but they also need to make sure business runs smoothly while people are away. Following a few simple guidelines can help employers balance the needs of their business with the needs of their employees.

Put it down in writing

A good first step is to develop a vacation policy and make sure each staff member has a copy. The policy should clearly outline proper procedures for requesting time off, such as how far ahead vacation requests should be submitted or any restrictions on how many people can be gone at one time. It should also advise staff of any days or weeks that are off limits due to operational needs.

In case of a scheduling conflict, the policy should outline how overlapping requests will be considered. First-come, first-served is one popular way to handle any conflicts, while some employers may decide based on seniority. While a policy can set some ground rules, employers can also resolve scheduling conflicts by simply talking to the employees involved to see if they can work out an agreement. If that doesn't work, they can fall back on the policy.

Continued on page 8
See page 7 for a related Best Practice story.

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This publication has been prepared for Alberta Employment and Immigration with the support of the Government of Canada.

Find us online at WWW.EMPLOYMENT.ALBERTA.CA/CENTRAL

NEXT ISSUE...
Janitorial careers

JOB SEEKER FEATURE STORY

Explore your many options

Continued from page 1

Think of the transferable skills you already have that can be applied to a different career path (see page 5 for a story on how to identify your transferable skills).

Another option is to adapt your skills to the existing job market and look for work in a totally different career. This may mean starting over in an entry-level position or at a lower pay level. But it's a great opportunity to learn new skills, expand your workplace capabilities and make new contacts. In the future, your new skills will enhance your resumé and make you more attractive to potential employers, whether you want to return to your old industry or go in a totally different direction. You may find you enjoy your new career so much you don't want to look back.

People working in cyclical jobs may have to examine their career options during an economic downturn. Exploring new career paths or going back to school to learn new skills are some options to consider.

Expand your training

During cyclical downturns, it's a great time to look for ways to expand your training or education. If you're employed, taking extra training can make you that much more valuable to your employer—and they may even offer to pay for it.

If you're out of work, going back to school, for a short course or even for a diploma or degree, will give you an edge over the competition when the economy rebounds and employers start hiring. You could continue your training in your existing occupation (for example, get the next level of an apprenticeship) or go in a completely different direction.

And if you're interested in a career that tends to be cyclical, don't let the downturn keep you from pursuing your dream. Work may be slow now, but long-term job forecasts are strong for many cyclical careers.

Land agents working in oil and gas, for example, have seen a decrease in work and some layoffs, but things are expected to pick up in the next couple years.

"Olds College has a two-year Land Agent program. Now that the industry is slow, this is the time you should be sitting in school," says Jason Tweten, president of the Alberta Association of Surface Land Agents. "There's no question there's going to be jobs, it's just a matter of how many and when."

Research your career options

During the boom of the past few years, there were labour shortages in many cyclical industries. Employers in these industries were constantly recruiting for a variety of well-paying, entry-level and skilled jobs. Many workers jumped into these jobs, perhaps not realizing their cyclical nature.

While there are hundreds of exciting and rewarding careers found in cyclical industries, it's not for everyone. If you're trying to decide on a career path, do your research to find out if the job is cyclical in nature.

Talk to employers or career counsellors so you can make the best decision for your needs. It's better to be prepared than to be surprised.

To learn more about different careers and whether or not they are cyclical, check out OccInfo on the Alberta Learning Information Service for detailed job descriptions on over 500 careers (www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo). You can search by job title, by industry or by your own interests.

Another option is to take a career aptitude test. There are plenty of free tests available online including:

- www.livecareer.com
- www.assessment.com
- www.careerplanner.com
- www.outofservice.com/bigfive

Call for advice

Job seekers can get free, expert advice about career, education and employment options by calling the Alberta Career Information Hotline at 1-800-661-3753. Hotline advisors can help job seekers find information to:

- Determine their career interests
- Clarify, change or create a career path
- Find their aptitudes
- Be competitive in today's labour market
- Explore career options.

Another option is to drop by your local Labour Market Information Centre (LMIC) to talk with a career employment consultant. A list of locations in Central Alberta can be found on page 9. *See the upcoming June edition of the Central Region Labour Market News to learn more about the services and programs available through your local LMIC.*

Post-secondary schools also have career counsellors who can help students with career and funding options (see page 6 for post-secondary funding options you may not be aware of).

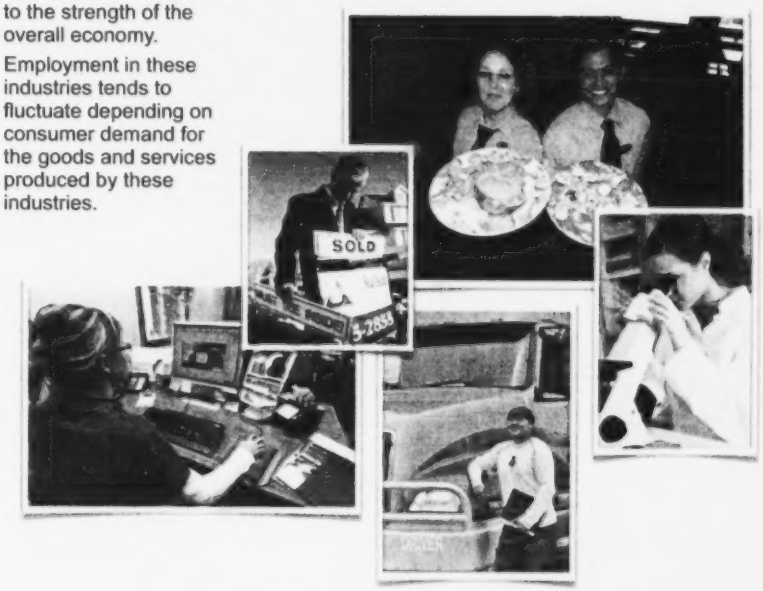
Cyclical industries

- Oil & Gas Extraction
- Agriculture & Forestry
- Construction
- Manufacturing

- Employment in these industries often fluctuates with the seasons.
- Commodity prices, the strength of the Canadian dollar and the overall economy also increase or decrease demand for workers in these industries.

- Wholesale & Retail Trade
- Transportation & warehousing
- Information & Culture
- Real Estate
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
- Administrative & Support
- Arts, Recreation & Entertainment
- Accommodation & Food Services
- Other services

- The performance of these industries is tied to the strength of the overall economy.
- Employment in these industries tends to fluctuate depending on consumer demand for the goods and services produced by these industries.



Non-cyclical industries

- Finance & Insurance
- Utilities
- Educational Services
- Health care & Social assistance
- Public Administration

- Employment in these industries tends to remain steady despite ups and downs in the provincial, national or global economy.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A ...

Land agent

How did you start in this career?
I was raised on a farm in Ponoka. I remember in 1986, a land agent came to the farm to sign my dad up for well site access. After seeing the land agent at work, I decided that's what I wanted to be. I took the Olds College Land Agent two-year program and graduated in 2000.

What do you enjoy about your job?
What I find most rewarding is building a long-term relationship with landowners in a region and gaining their trust. You can work in an area for long periods of time and it's good to know the whole area trusts you.

Does your job affect your lifestyle?
When I first started I lived in Calgary, but operated mostly out of Lloydminster, so I was never home. Field land agents spend most of their time out of the office, on the road. Now, I'm a coordinator, which is more office-based. I assign projects to the field agents. I do not miss living in hotel rooms and eating restaurant food every day.

What are some of the challenges of your job?
Most people aren't unhappy to see land agents, but there are a few people who just don't want any activity on their land. We're the people they yell at because we're the people who get put in front of them. We're the face of the client when we're out there negotiating. You have to learn not to take it personally. Deadlines are also a challenge. Sometimes you get very short notice on a lot of projects and then you're pushed for time. That can be really stressful.

Who is suited to this career?
Someone who has patience, honesty, integrity and someone who is thick skinned. I've always been kind of a talker—you need good communication skills. As a field agent, you make a lot of phone calls and meet with a lot of landowners. You've got to deal with all different types of people from all walks of life. You should be a people-person and you should be able to work independently—when things are busy, agents are probably spending 80 per cent of their day in the field, usually in rural areas.

Red Deer land agent Will Evans.

Has the economic slowdown effected your industry?
Most land companies in the central region have laid off agents, including the company I work for. So the slowdown has effected the industry greatly.

What advice can you give to workers in cyclical industries?
It has been shown that in times of economic crisis most industries can face downturns. The best advice I can give is to understand that the industry that you choose to work in can be cyclical, and to manage your finances accordingly.

What are your future career goals?
I plan on staying with Access Land for the foreseeable future. Over the next few years I look forward to developing more skills and moving further into a management role.

What advice would you give to someone looking at this career?
Talk to a land agent to find out what the job is like and if it's a career you would enjoy.

CAREER PROFILE

Will Evans

Evans works as a lead land agent for Access Land Services, which is located in Red Deer. The company provides surface land agent services primarily to the oil and gas industry. Evans has been working as a land agent since 2001 and has worked his way up from a field agent to a management position. While he still does some field work, his main job is to coordinate the activities of other land agents in his office.

"We work with landowners from many walks of life, but mostly farmers in Central Alberta," says Evans.

Access Land Services, on behalf of its clients, negotiates with landowners for surface access to their property, so things like well sites, roadways or pipelines can be built. The agents also negotiate compensation for the landowners, as set out in the Surface Rights Act.

Working as a LAND AGENT (NOC 1225)

Wages
According to the 2007 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, land agents in the province earned from $21.66 to $35.15 per hour. The average annual salary was $59,070.

Qualifications
To become a land agent, you must obtain a land agent licence from the province. You must be at least 18 years old and have a minimum two years related post-secondary education, such as the Land Agent program at Olds College (www.oldscollege.ca). Details on how to become a land agent are available online at employment.alberta.ca/lal (click on Publications on the left-hand side).

Hiring tips
The Alberta Association of Surface Land Agents (www.aasla.com) and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen (www.landman.ca) have online job boards. Employers often post job ads directly on their websites. To find potential employers, look in the Yellow Pages under Land Consultants or try searching online using keywords such as "land services" or "land agent," plus the community you want to find work in.

TIPS FOR JOB SEEKERS

work it out

Transferrable **skills ...**

What jobs match your skills and experience?

It can be a tough decision to change careers but you often don't need to start from scratch. Anyone making a switch should look closely at the skills they've already built up at work, at home, through volunteer work or even as part of a hobby that might help in a new position. Any skill that may be useful in another job is called a *transferrable skill*, and you probably have more than you think.

If you were a truck driver, for example, your skill set would include a lot more than driving. You would have to read, understand and follow the instructions laid down in manuals and regulations. If you delivered directly to clients, you would probably have good customer service skills. Truck drivers also have to be good with math, and if you were an owner-operator, you would probably know a lot about bookkeeping.

To figure out just what transferrable skills you have, try splitting the job into tasks and then think about what skills you needed to finish each one.

A great place to help you get started is the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada website (www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/home.shtml). On the 'Essential skills' page, HRSDC describes the skills needed in over 300 jobs. The site not only helps a job seeker understand their own skills, it can also help find jobs and careers that match your skills.

Know yourself, then check out the options

If you are making a jump to a new job, the first step is understanding what you have to offer. The second step is exploring the jobs available, and seeing if your skills can transfer to those jobs. Again, the essential skills site can help you get started. Using the Search by Important Skills page, just tick off your skills and the website will produce a list of occupations that match. Or flip through the descriptions of jobs you are interested in to see if you have what it takes.

What skills do truck drivers and bank tellers have in common?

Quite often it's a shock to see just how closely related some jobs are. At first, bank tellers don't seem to have much in common with truck drivers. But when you actually break the job down by skills needed, they have a lot in common (see top right).

While the HRSDC website is a good start to finding out about new job options, don't stop there. Job hunters can get a better understanding about potential careers by asking people in the field, reading about jobs in publications like this one, or using informative websites. The Alberta Learning Information Service website (www.alis.alberta.ca), for instance, provides information about occupations, wages and the labour market.

No two jobs could be more different than truck driving and being a bank teller. Right? Not quite. HRSDC's Essential Skills shows the basics skills needed for each are very close.

The skill levels required to do certain tasks as part of a job are rated 1 to 5, with 5 being the most complex.

What skill levels are needed for a **truck driver**?	Essential skills	What skill levels are needed to be a **bank teller**?
1-3	Reading and understanding text	1-3
1-3	Writing skills	1-2
1-2	Oral communication skills	1-2
1-2	Numeracy skills (math)	1-3
1-3	Problem solving skills	1-3
1-2	Computer skills	1-2
2	Planning and organization skills	1
1-3	Document use	1-3

Added bonus: a better resumé

As a job hunter, you can build your resumé to highlight your transferrable skills. This is especially important if you want to switch careers. You can show employers that even if you haven't worked in that field before, you have the basic skills they need. They may be willing to hire you and provide some on-the-job training to get you up to speed.

COMING EVENTS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA

EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS

Job seekers can meet employers who are hiring each week at Employer Connections. Presentations are every Wednesday at the Red Deer Labour Market Information Centre (4911-51 St., 2nd Floor First Red Deer Place). This is your chance to learn about career opportunities with different employers and ask them questions about their company. Employer Connections profiles of nearly 100 regional businesses have been compiled and are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central.

JOB SEEKERS

Going back to school? Student financing options

Going to college or university can be expensive. The good news is there are many financing options out there to help students cover their education costs. Some options are outlined below. For more information, call the Student Funding Contact Centre toll-free at 1-800-222-6485. Students can also contact post-secondary schools for help and advice on financing options that may meet their needs.

Student loans

A student loan is intended to supplement your financial resources for education costs. You pay no interest on the loan while you attend school full-time. When you complete your studies, you have to repay the loan, with interest.

There are two loan sources for Alberta students:

- EDULINX Canada Corporation administers Alberta student loans for the province (www.edulinx.ca).
- National Student Loans Service Centre administers Canada Student Loans for the federal government (www.canlearn.ca).

Only one application is needed to apply for both loans. You may be eligible if you can prove financial need and other criteria. Students who aren't eligible for provincial or federal loans can try applying for a loan or line of credit from their bank.

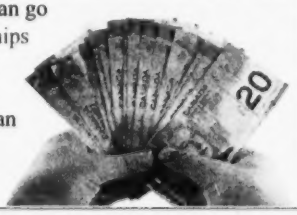
Grants and bursaries

Grants and bursaries are forms of financial aid for low to middle-income students. The money does not have to be paid back. Both the provincial and federal governments offer numerous grants and bursaries. Eligibility varies with each grant or bursary. Some examples include:

- **Alberta Opportunity Bursary**- Up to $1,500 per year for first or second year students who have financial need.
- **Millennium Alberta Rural Incentive Bursary**- Up to $1,000 annually for full-time, first or second year students from rural Alberta, enrolled in an undergraduate program at least two years in length.
- **Canada Student Grant**- $250 per month for students from low-and middle-income families attending a university, college or trade school program.

Scholarships

Scholarships are monetary awards based on academic or other achievements, and they're not only for high school students. There are hundreds of scholarships awarded each year, offered by government, post-secondary institutions, private industry and service organizations. Students can go online to alis.alberta.ca.scholarships and click on *What scholarships and bursaries are out there* to search an online database. You can search alphabetically or by keyword, school or category.



How to use the JobBank

Internet job boards like the Job Bank (www.jobbank.gc.ca) are powerful tools. With a few clicks, a job hunter can search any region of Canada for a particular job category, and even search for employers who've posted ads in the past. Job Bank also has advice on writing a resumé, tips for the job search, advice for finding unadvertised positions, information on self-employment, and notes on finding work in non-profit organizations. With computers and the Internet, job hunters can even automate parts of their job hunt.

With **Job Alert**, any job that matches one of three possible profiles will be automatically emailed to users.

Job Match allows a user to create profiles that will be automatically shown to employers searching for new workers.

See page 9 for other job boards and job seeker resources.

Meet employers: Employer Connections

Once a week Red Deer's Labour Market Information Centre hosts Employer Connections where a single employer is available to sit down and explain their labour needs. It's an opportunity for job seekers to speak directly with the people who can best explain a job and a career.

Find out about upcoming Employer Connections at employment.alberta.ca/central where there are links to two-page summaries of employers' presentations. This website also has useful information on upcoming job fairs and events, links to previous editions of the Labour Market News, and links to Finding Work In ..., a monthly publication giving practical advice about finding work in different industries.

EMPLOYERS

For employers, the Job Bank offers a simple and free way of posting job ads right across the country, while the website's **Job Match** function allows employers to immediately search a database of resumés. The site also has hundreds of well organized links and articles that explain every stage in the hiring process. To post a job ad visit www.jobbank.gc.ca.

Vacation scheduling

Small business owners make it work

Best Practice FOR EMPLOYERS

Employees work hard for your company and they deserve time off to go on vacation. But when they're gone, it can be a real challenge for employers—and other staff—to fill the gaps.

Even if only one person is away, productivity can drop and business can come to a grinding stop. It can be an even bigger problem for small businesses who are already operating with a minimum of employees.

Scheduling staff vacations can be a balancing act, but Candace Dunning, who owns a bistro and ceramics studio, manages by cross-training her employees for both businesses.

Bistro on Gaetz / Hot Pot Studio

For small-business owner Candace Dunning, cross-training her staff helps lessen the pain when employees are on holiday.

Dunning owns Bistro on Gaetz and Hot Pot Studio, a ceramics shop. The businesses are located next door to each other in downtown Red Deer.

"Ideally, I like to have six employees on staff, between the two businesses," says Dunning. "I train them for both the restaurant and studio, so that when one employee goes on holidays the others can cover for them, no matter which side is short-staffed."

Even when people aren't away, the cross-training has other advantages. For example, if the restaurant is really busy at lunch, Dunning can pull staff from the studio and have them work in the bistro until things slow down.

Besides cross-training, Dunning has implemented other procedures to ensure her businesses run smoothly when staff are away. Around summer and Christmas—popular times when employees often ask to take vacations—she hires temporary "floaters."

"This way we're not shorthanded," says Dunning. "Never short staff yourself. It's hard, in these times, to have more staff than what you need. But I've just learned that you'll be far less stressed out and the business will run smoother if you have that one extra floater."

While she doesn't have a vacation policy, Dunning asks staff to give her advance notice of any vacation requests, although she tries to be flexible. "I usually ask for at least two weeks notice," she says. "Usually I approve requests on a first-come, first-served basis, but if two people want the same time off usually it's determined by seniority."

And if both staff must leave at the same time, that's where the casual floater comes in, says Dunning.

Knowing the vacation schedule in advance helps Dunning plan ahead to keep from overbooking work. "We try not to book too many pottery parties or take on really large catering orders when people are away," she says.

Before staff leave for vacation from the Hot Pot Studio, they are asked to update the store's "communication book." This updates other staff on the status of orders and lets staff know of any parties that are booked.

"We are a team and everyone tries hard to lighten the load. It takes a little planning but somehow it works out," says Dunning.

Innisfail Truck Ranch

At the Innisfail Truck Ranch, customer service is a top priority. So when employees take vacations, it's important the level of service doesn't drop just because the office is short staffed.

"That's the worst thing that can happen—we've got too many people looking for vehicles on the lot and not enough salesmen. Then people feel like they aren't being looked after or are being hurried through the process," says owner Daryl Czuy.

The business has five sales staff, so to avoid this scenario, the business limits the number of sales staff that can take holidays at the same time.

"I need to always have three available sales people at all times. If I have more than one wanting the time off in the same time period, they usually can't have it," says Czuy. "It goes by seniority."

Still, Czuy tries to accommodate vacation requests in special circumstances. If there are conflicts, the salesperson who needs the time off will have to check with the other sales staff to see if they can cover some extra shifts.

Employees are asked to book their vacations at least 60 days in advance, so the business can be prepared. And before sales staff punch the time clock, they let Czuy know the status of deals that are in the works so he doesn't have to call them for updates while they're on vacation. "I just hate doing that. They deserve the time off."

EMPLOYERS

Vacation planning

Continued from page 1

Set a deadline

By setting a deadline for vacation requests, employers will have plenty of time to plan ahead for any potential issues. They will have time to bring in extra workers, if required, or to ask other workers to put in some overtime. They'll also be able to set deadlines for projects that an employee needs to complete before they leave.

Before they go...

Before they head out on vacation, ask employees to complete these simple tasks to make sure things run smoothly while they're away:

- Update a colleague or manager about any projects they're working on and if any action needs to be taken while they're gone.
- Provide a list of contacts for projects that need attention.
- Notify clients and co-workers (through voicemail and email) that they're away, and who to contact in case of an emergency.

Cross-training employees is another option employers have to ensure business productivity doesn't falter when an employee takes a holiday. An employee who is familiar with a colleague's job can help out while they're away. When the vacationer gets back, they'll have less work to catch up on and won't be overwhelmed.

Employment standards: What are the rules?

Basic vacation pay entitlement

The basic vacation pay entitlement for Alberta workers is:

- After one year of employment, two weeks vacation with pay
- After five years, three weeks vacation with pay.

Some employers may choose to offer a higher number of paid vacation weeks. Employees in certain occupations are exempt from vacations and vacation pay (go online to employment.alberta.ca/employmentstandards for full details). Vacations must be taken in one unbroken period, however the employee can ask to take their vacations in shorter periods. If a mutually acceptable time can't be found, the employer can decide on the time. However, the employer must provide at least two weeks notice, in writing, of the vacation start date.

General holidays and general holiday pay

The Employment Standards Code names nine general holidays: New Year's Day, Alberta Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day and Christmas Day. There are different rules regarding the payment of employees on a general holiday, whether they work or get the day off. See the Employment Standards website listed above for complete details.

In addition to the nine general holidays, some employers may choose to recognize additional days as general holidays for their employees, such as Easter Monday, Heritage Day and Boxing Day. If an employer designates one of these as a general holiday, all rules for general holiday pay apply.

FOR A BEST PRACTICE STORY ON LOCAL EMPLOYERS AND THEIR VACATION STRATEGIES, SEE PAGE 7.

Resources

Both federal and provincial governments have practical programs to help meet the current needs of employers. Here are a few programs that can be of assistance to business.

Information sources

The Labour Market Information page on the Alberta Employment and Immigration (E&I) website offers links to labour force statistics, forecasts, and wage and salary information. (employment.alberta.ca/lmi)

- The Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP) website (www.centralalberta.ab.ca) has hundreds of links to information sources and programs including:
- Support for Training Workers
- Wage Subsidy Programs
- Recruiting Employees
- Employment Services in Central Alberta
- Foreign Worker Employer Guide

Seminars and networking

Employer Connections are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. (across from the Provincial Building).

The meetings are an opportunity to meet job seekers, employment agencies and career counsellors. Each week a single employer is showcased and presents their current job opportunities. To participate free of charge call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

Labour solutions

- Red Deer Aboriginal Employment Services. Ph. 403-358-7734
- Metis Employment Services. Ph. 403-342-6636
- Career Assistance Network (www.rdcan.ca) provides job search workshops, job board and assistance for job seekers. Ph. 403-341-7811
- Employment Placement Support Services supports Albertans with workplace training and enhanced employment services. Ph. 403-343-6249
- Employment Access offers employment programs for clients with disabilities. Ph. 403-341-2363
- DRES provides support and assistance to employers hiring people with disabilities. Contact the Canada-Alberta Service Centre in Red Deer. Ph. 403-340-5353

Personalized help when needed

There are dozens of programs available to employers. E&I employees will visit the workplace and provide a summary of options and opportunities. For example, they can direct managers to initiatives that will help their business, and workforce adjustment teams are available to help employees find new work if they are laid off.

For more information call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

Sign up free: We're live and online

In the News, an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures, and *Finding Work In*, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central. A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

On the same web page there are *Labour Market News* products for Stettler, Wetaskiwin, Vermilion and Wainwright.

EMPLOYERS

Vacation planning

Continued from page 1

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- After one year of employment, two weeks vacation with pay
- After five years, three weeks vacation with pay.

Some employers may choose to offer a higher number of paid vacation weeks. Employees in certain occupations are exempt from vacations and vacation pay (go online to employment.alberta.ca/employmentstandards for full details). Vacations must be taken in one unbroken period, however the employee can ask to take their vacations in shorter periods. If a mutually acceptable time can't be found, the employer can decide on the time. However, the employer must provide at least two weeks notice, in writing, of the vacation start date.

General holidays and general holiday pay

The Employment Standards Code names nine general holidays: New Year's Day, Alberta Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day and Christmas Day. There are different rules regarding the payment of employees on a general holiday, whether they work or get the day off. See the Employment Standards website listed above for complete details.

In addition to the nine general holidays, some employers may choose to recognize additional days as general holidays for their employees, such as Easter Monday, Heritage Day and Boxing Day. If an employer designates one of these as a general holiday, all rules for general holiday pay apply.

FOR A BEST PRACTICE STORY ON LOCAL EMPLOYERS AND THEIR VACATION STRATEGIES, SEE PAGE 7.

EMPLOYER

Resources

Both federal and provincial governments have practical programs to help meet the current needs of employers. Here are a few programs that can be of assistance to business.

Information sources

The Labour Market Information page on the Alberta Employment and Immigration (E&I) website offers links to labour force statistics, forecasts, and wage and salary information. (employment.alberta.ca/lmi)

- **The Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP) website (www.centralalberta.ab.ca) has hundreds of links to information sources and programs including:**
- Support for Training Workers
- Wage Subsidy Programs
- Recruiting Employees
- Employment Services in Central Alberta
- Foreign Worker Employer Guide

Seminars and networking

Employer Connections are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. (across from the Provincial Building).

The meetings are an opportunity to meet job seekers, employment agencies and career counsellors.

Each week a single employer is showcased and presents their current job opportunities. To participate free of charge call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

Labour solutions

- **Red Deer Aboriginal Employment Services. Ph. 403-358-7734**
- Métis Employment Services. **Ph. 403-342-6636**
- **Career Assistance Network (www.rdcan.ca) provides job search workshops, job board and assistance for job seekers. Ph. 403-341-7811**
- Employment Placement Support Services **supports Albertans with workplace training and enhanced employment services. Ph. 403-343-6249**
- **Employment Access offers employment programs for clients with disabilities. Ph. 403-341-2363**
- DRES **provides support and assistance to employers hiring people with disabilities. Contact the Canada-Alberta Service Centre in Red Deer. Ph. 403-340-5353**

Personalized help when needed

There are dozens of programs available to employers. E&I employees will visit the workplace and provide a summary of options and opportunities. For example, they can direct managers to initiatives that will help their business, and workforce adjustment teams are available to help employees find new work if they are laid off.

For more information call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

Sign up free: We're live and online

In the News, an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures, and *Finding Work In*, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central. A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

On the same web page there are *Labour Market News* products for Stettler, Wetaskiwin, Vermillion and Wainwright.

JOB SEEKER

Resources

There are many resources in the central region that can be helpful to job seekers and workers alike.

Where to find us

This publication, In the News, (an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures) and Finding Work In, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central.

A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

Job search and career websites

- www.jobbank.gc.ca **(Job listings, links and other services)**
- www.alis.gov.ab.ca **(Alberta Learning Information Service)**
- www.workopolis.ca **(Job listings)**
- www.monster.ca **(Job listings)**
- www.nextsteps.org **(Job resources for youth)**
- www.albertajobs.com **(Job listings)**
- www.hgcareers.com **(Job listings)**
- www.healthjobs.ab.ca **(Health care job listings)**

Job search and career information by phone

Alberta Career Information Hotline:

1-800-661-3753

Fax: (780) 422-0372 TDD: (780) 422-5283

Resumé review service

The Government of Alberta e-Resumé Review Service is a great way to have a resumé reviewed and improved, before sending it to employers.

To access the service, log on to www.alis.gov.ab.ca/hotline/resume and follow the instructions to send your resumé for review.

The service is free to residents of Alberta and those seeking work in Alberta.

Resources for labour market information

These websites offer a wealth of labour market information on Alberta and specific communities.

- employment.alberta.ca/lmi **(Alberta Employment and Immigration)**
- www.alis.gov.ab.ca **(Alberta Learning Information Service)**
- www.albertafirst.com **(Business and economic information)**
- www.centralalberta.ab.ca **(Central Alberta Economic Partnership)**
- www.alis.gov.ab.ca/employment/lmi/alberta.asp) **(Labour market information across Alberta)**
- www.labourmarketinformation.ca **(Service Canada)**

Seminars and networking

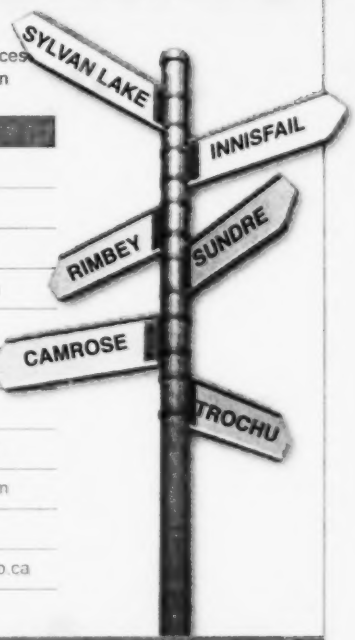
Employer Connections are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. across from the Provincial Building.

The meetings are an opportunity to meet employers face to face.

New to Central Alberta?

See past issues of the Labour Market News (employment.alberta.ca/central) for employment, social services, health care, transportation and other great resources available in your community. Information is also available on municipal websites (see links below).

City / Town	Month
Camrose	www.camrose.com
Didsbury	www.didsbury.ca
Drayton Valley	www.draytonvalley.ca
Innisfail	www.townofinnisfail.com
Lacombe	www.lacombe.ca
Olds	www.town.olds.ab.ca
Ponoka	www.ponoka.org
Red Deer	www.city.red-deer.ab.ca
Rocky Mountain House	www.rockymtnhouse.com
Stettler	www.stettler.net
Sylvan Lake	www.town.sylvan-lake.ab.ca
Wetaskiwin	www.wetaskiwin.ca



LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION CENTRES

Labour Market Information Centres (LMIC's) provide information to help you make career, learning and work decisions. LMICs have books, magazines, newspapers, software and videos about employment-related topics.

There are LMIC's across Alberta. For a complete list, see: employment.alberta.ca/lmic.

LMIC's in Central Alberta:

Camrose Alberta Service Centre
3rd Flr., Gemini Centre, 6708 - 48 Ave.
Ph. (780) 608-2525

Drayton Valley Sub-Office
2nd Floor Provincial Building
5136 - 51 Ave. Ph. (780) 542-3134

Olds Alberta Service Centre
4905 - 50 Ave. Ph. (403) 507-8060

Red Deer Canada-Alberta Service Centre
2nd Floor First Red Deer Place, 4911 - 51 St.
Ph. (403) 340-5353

Rocky Mountain House Alberta Service Centre, 4919 - 51 St. Ph. (403) 845-8590

Stettler Alberta Service Centre
4835 - 50 St. Ph. (403) 742-7586

Wetaskiwin Alberta Service Centre
1st Floor Macadil Building
5201 - 51 Ave. Ph. (780) 361 1272

Lloydminster LMIC
5016 - 48 St. Ph. (780) 871-6445

Wainwright LMIC
810 - 14 Ave. Ph. (780) 842-7500

Vermilion LMIC
4701 - 52 St. Ph. (780) 853-8164